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cation, or where high entrance requirements cannot be rigidly enforced. Such colleges must keep the four years in order to maintain the integrity of the system. The first year, in these instances, must be one in which, as an eminent professor once described the Freshman year in his college, "the young men are licked into shape." But let us hope that the day is approaching when all our better colleges shall have similar requirements for admission, which shall be identical with a suitable amount of the best work in our high schools and academies. Then can all the colleges proceed hand in hand. The precious fourth year will not be lost. The better colleges, even the smaller ones, by the intellectual necessities of the life of the competent college professor, will provide for the more ambitious of their students, as they have already provided, from one year to two years of advanced liberal study beyond the requirement for the bachelor's degree, and will mark the satisfactory completion of the studies of this supplementary period by the bestowal of the degree of Master of Arts.

I have, I fear, only outlined an argument in support of the proposition upon which I have spoken. There are other arguments, other considerations; but these are the considerations that have led me, as a member of the Harvard faculty, to seek to render it easier for college students to complete their course in three years. The controlling motive in all this movement is the desire to make the college more and more of a power in our national life.

The second speaker, upon the same subject, was Professor Thomas D. Seymour of Yale University.

#### THE THREE YEARS' COLLEGE COURSE

As we listened last evening to President Tucker's charming address, I thought that after his convincing statement of the important function of the college as a bulwark against the dangers of specialization, I might almost say with "my double," "there has been so much said, and so well said, that I will not

further occupy the time." But after the persuasive words of my friend Professor Wright this morning, I suppose I am bound to perform the service which was assigned to me by our executive committee.

I too must disclaim being a representative of the views of my college. I have hardly heard this question mentioned in New Haven since it was last discussed by this body. It is not at present for us a very lively question.

Never before has the demand for men of marked ability, well prepared for work, been so loud and imperative. The world seems to have little need of men of mediocre powers and insufficient training, while a man who is ready to do first rate work will not have to wait long for his opportunity. Men engaged in the active affairs of life tell me that they know of places standing vacant, ready each with a salary of ten, fifteen, or even twenty thousand dollars, for a man who could at once perform the duties of the office. Every large college or university has some vacant chairs which would be filled in a week if the right men should be found.

Yet the pressure of modern life and the contest for a living place are much greater in this country now than ever before—though not yet so fierce and heavy as in Germany. This pressure and contest doubtless tend to make later and later the age at which a man can establish himself with independence in his own home. The young man now needs a larger capital for a start in life than his father had before him. A man of wealth, who had won for himself all that he possessed, on being asked recently how much capital a young man would need to give him as good opportunities as he himself had had, beginning with nothing, to make a fortune, said "not less than \$100,000." Others have confirmed this opinion.

This principle is just as true of mental as of pecuniary capital. A young man needs more now than ever before. A classmate of mine two years after graduating from college was made probate judge in the largest town in Dakota; but I do not suppose that any graduate of the last class at Yale will have so important a

judicial position within two years. This classmate was made probate judge before he was really ready to pass an examination for admission to the bar, not because he was fit for the position, but because no one more fit was at hand, and men hoped that he would learn to perform the duties of his office.

Another classmate, at the age of 22, was appointed to one of the most important consulates of the United States in Mexico—without any political influence—not as being fit for the place, but because he could speak a little Spanish and might learn his duties. Such a young man now would not be considered as candidate for such a place, without overwhelming political influence. My own case, too, is typical: Two years' study of philology at the universities of Leipzig and Berlin, with a visit to Greece, gave me a distinct advantage over most of my comrades who set out with me in the race of active life. But two years of graduate study are considered necessary now for a young man or woman who is to have a good place as teacher in an important secondary school, and confer no special advantages. My son will need five years of graduate study if he is to have as good opportunities for advancement as his father had. College teachers are not promoted to permanent professorships at so early an age as formerly. Near the beginning of this century the first president, Timothy Dwight, caused the appointment as professors of three men, each of whom continued in the service of the college for at least half a century, and who amply justified the wisdom of their selection—Jeremiah Day, Benjamin Silliman, James Luce Kingsley. Each of these received his permanent appointment only six years after receiving his degree of Bachelor of Arts. No one of them had enjoyed any special training for his work. They were obliged, evidently, to fit themselves for their positions after they had received them. My own father was called to be the rector of the Hopkins Grammar School of Hartford immediately on his graduation from college. The case of clergymen was similar. New England has not forgotten the name of Leonard Bacon, who was made the pastor of the Centre Church of New Haven when he was but 23 or 24 years old, and remained its pastor for more than fifty

years. I doubt whether any church in New England of the same relative importance as the First Church in New Haven has called so young a pastor during the last twenty-five years. Bacon, too, fitted himself for the duties of his office while he was performing them. The politicians of the world are older than they were two or three generations ago. Think of Fox as Lord of the Admiralty at 21, and Pitt as Chancellor of the Exchequer at 23 years of age; and John Randolph of Roanoke referring to his constituents for information the colleague who doubted whether he had attained the age required for admission to the United States Senate. One of my nearest neighbors—a hale and hearty man whose carriage is far more erect than mine—was a member of the United States Congress 45 years ago. Few of the congressmen of today will be hale and hearty in 1942. Young men have no such chance for political preferment nowadays; they have less chance abroad than in our own country, and less in the eastern than in the western part of our country. Why, charitable organizations treat as boys and irresponsible persons young men of 20 and 21 who in earlier times would have been thought old enough to bear the burdens of a family, and everybody knows that most Y. M. C. A.'s are managed by men over fifty.

A young physician is now obliged to wait years for remunerative practice unless some kind friend in the profession will lend him a helping hand by sending patients to his office. He must practice in the hospitals and among the poor. A young lawyer of brilliant parts is more likely perhaps than his equal in age in any other profession to obtain early success, since he needs only to attract the attention and win the confidence of some one man who may intrust to him the care of large interests.

In addition to the cold comfort that in other countries young men are worse off than here, one remark may fairly be made parenthetically to cheer the soul of the young man of the present day: College graduates live several years longer after graduation than they did a century ago; and thus can afford to take more time for the preparation for their work.

I understand that most of what I have said is trite and com-

monplace. All this has been said in order to show that I too appreciate the stress of the situation which is urged by those who demand a reduction in the length of the college course. I have often congratulated myself that I was born when I was; that I was not compelled to meet the stress of modern competition for place. The young men who are growing up are subjected to severer trials in many respects than the earlier generations had to endure. If their time of education can be shortened without evil results and they can be established in homes of their own a year earlier than at present, every one should be glad. I am not sure that our system is right in all important respects, and believe that much valuable time is wasted. For one thing, and for my own opinion, I hold that our vacations are much too long (an unpopular view to present before a body of teachers! but I mean too long) not for the teacher who will make proper use of his leisure,—but for the boy, who is often fairly demoralized by the long period of idleness. For another thing, I believe the work of our schools is too often set to suit the pace of the dullard or the lazy fellow, rather than that of the lad who is worthy of the best education. I do not agree with Professor Wright in holding that every boy should be urged to go to college. We have all of us seen “five hundred-dollar boys” receiving a five thousand-dollar education, and much time is wasted in the effort to give a keen steel edge to a mind of a leaden texture. I trust the time is near at hand when every young man who has the ability and the will to study shall enjoy the privileges of a college education, but I would not have the advance of those who have mental strength and endurance, coupled with ambition, retarded for the sake of those who cannot or will not study. In this matter too much regard has been had for the dull mass, and not half enough for the worthy few. And students in college are not alone in being distracted by many engagements. A very good fellow failed in his examinations at Yale the other day because he had been in charge of a football team, a glee club, and the Y. M. C. A. in a large and favorably known school. According to my observations, boys

who are going to make their mark in a profession can be ready for college much earlier than they are, although some good minds mature late and slowly. If a boy is ready for college at 17, takes his degree of Bachelor of Arts at 21, and is ordained to the Christian ministry at 24 years of age, he is nominally ready for his life work quite as young as he should be put in charge of a church; he is younger than most men desire as a pastor. If the young man spends four years in the study of medicine in this country, after leaving college, and one or two years abroad, he will have time still to display his modest sign and exercise patience before many families will care to call him even to treat a case of measles.

The American public is not crying for *young* men. Compared with half a century ago our people have a distinct distrust of young men. The demand of the day is for *well-trained* men of broad views. Some young men, some ill-trained men, some narrow-minded men find good places for work, and succeed; but the rule is as I have said. Of course this prevalent distrust is not caused by us teachers, but it must be regarded by us. If a physician is not likely to be called to practice before he is twenty-seven or twenty-eight years of age we need not advise him to hurry through his course of preparation, that he may be ready to practice at twenty-five. The cry has been for specialists in every branch of learning; perhaps the popular cry is still for specialists; and we all recognize the fact that the age of polyhistorians is gone. We know of no Scaliger or even a Whewell, to whom one could appeal as an authority on every and any subject. The temptation is strong, since a student must confine himself to a limited field of study, to confine one's self to a very narrow field. By this means a name as a specialist can be sooner acquired. Only the more thoughtful seem to consider that if an edifice is to be high it should have a broad foundation, laid deep in the earth.

The extreme of folly in this matter is now receiving due recognition; young men of good sense and opportunities in general no longer consider the time taken for their college course

as time stolen or robbed from their profession. The sentiment of the community has improved; men see that to enter the law school or medical school at once after leaving the high school is of the nature of the haste which makes waste. Many a young man who has been admitted to the bar as soon as he came of legal age, while some of his school companions were still in college, has seen himself outstripped in the race for preferment, by these same comrades before he was thirty years old, and has learned even then that the higher honors of the profession were not for him. Even in business and manufacturing, a college-bred man has often walked rapidly past those who had years the start of him. The tendency toward specialism in the present day seems to me excessive, and to bode ill as well as good. The minute division of mechanical labor in our day has caused a great increase in mechanical products, but has lowered the mental and moral level of the workman. If the division of mental labor continues, our educated classes will lose rather than gain in the respect of the community. One of the stories which inflame me as a red rag excites a bull, is that which is frequently told about the German professor of Greek who is said to have devoted himself exclusively to the study of the Greek article, and to have regretted on his deathbed that he had not restricted his investigations to the dative case of the article. This familiar story is not only false,—it is not even *ben trovato*. German philologists have been far too wise to limit themselves in this way. In close connection with my own studies I know that the three most distinguished philologists of the University of Leipzig, apart from classical philology, each took his degree in some Greek study. Leskien, the Slavonic scholar, wrote his Doctor's dissertation on Bekker's restitution of the Homeric digamma; Windisch, the Professor of Sanskrit, one on the Homeric hymns; Brugmann, the most noted living authority on comparative philology, wrote his thesis on compensative lengthening in Greek. Surely no one of these men has ever regretted his earlier and broader studies. Some of our most distinguished scientists have been honored for their attainments in other branches of



knowledge, while I never knew a narrower minded man than a chemist of real ability who sought to save time for his specialty by giving himself to that alone from the time when he left school. That all studies should be planned with reference to future work, is right and well, but not that all studies should *seem* to *young men* likely to lead immediately to greater distinction in Greek, biology, mathematics, or law.

The best preparation is demanded for the conditions of modern life, and if we encourage young men to enter the duties of life with an inferior preparation, we wrong both them and the people whom they are to serve. Perhaps this may be regarded as another commonplace saying, but I believe the warning of caution is needed.

Some who engage in educational discussions at times forget that experiments with the higher education are far more dangerous than similar experiments with primary or even secondary education. If an experiment does not work well in the primary school, no one has been greatly injured ; the child's time is not worth very much, and the evil can be corrected later without much trouble. If an experiment in the secondary schools works ill, some college or scientific school is likely to remonstrate soon. But if an experiment in the higher education works ill, the discovery is often delayed for years, after several college generations of men have suffered irretrievably. This is an important consideration which suggests caution in dealing with a proposition to give our educated men one year less of college life than their fathers enjoyed.

Four is not a sacred number—neither is three, any longer—but still the loss would be real if the time of college companionship and study—the period when studies of general interest are pursued in a manly way—were reduced from four to three years. Some of us have seen often that in many respects the fourth year of the college course has been worth more to the student than any of the preceding three, even when this clearly has not been due to the nature of the studies pursued, but to the greater permanence of the relations of college life. Some

of my friends think this to be true today in a more important sense than ever before, because of the increased size of college classes. As in many other things this influence is cumulative. Certain medicines instead of losing their effect become more and more potent as the patient continues to use them, and so it is with the influences of college life.

Many doubtless have wondered that the great leader who has done more than any other to require and induce the preparatory schools to do the work which in the memory of some of us was done in the Freshman year of the college course, and who thus aided to elevate the standard of graduation from college as well as of admission to the Freshman class — that he of all men should be the one to advocate the cutting off of the fourth year of the college course, thus proposing to graduate the student at the point in his course at which he was graduated thirty years ago! Most of us, I presume, have taken both pride and pleasure in the gradual increase of college requirements, although some inconvenience has been caused. Shall we now grant at once that this has been an error? When did the reasons which prevailed a quarter of a century ago cease to be valid? How much friction between schools and colleges might have been saved if Harvard College had said in 1869, "No, we do not approve of raising the standard of admission, and shall not attempt it. Our students on their graduation know quite enough of the general studies of the college course. They have had their propædeutics, and should enter upon their special studies at once." In that case, if that had been said, then joint commissions and school boards, college faculties and gatherings of school-teachers would not have needed to discuss the question whether this subject or that could fairly and without too much friction be added at once to the entrance requirements for college, and to the school curriculum, or whether the increased demand should be postponed for a year or two. As some of you will remember, I have a special grievance in my own department — because the requirements in Greek were raised until half of the Homeric study was taken by the schools. Then, unfortunately for us

Greeks, the disposition to increase the requirements ceased, and men began to talk of a reaction, and of a three-years' college course, with poor Homer half in and half out! If only the elevating process had continued until the secondary schools had taken all of the Homeric study, I should be happier.

But letting bygones be bygones, may not the student spend four years in the preparatory school and three years in college, as well as three years in the academy and four years in college? No. For two reasons. In the first place (though I hardly dare to say this aloud), very many of the secondary schools of the country are not so well prepared to give good instruction as the colleges. We all recognize the great superiority of the majority of the schools which are represented in this body to the average preparatory school of the country. The *average* college could do the work of the Freshman year of thirty years ago better than the average school — although I do not believe that the colleges of that time gave as good instruction in those subjects as the schools are giving today. Secondly, I believe fully that if the colleges and the schools are to divide between them seven years of the student's life, four years of this period should be assigned to the college course, irrespective of the powers and equipments of the institutions. Granting that many young men spend their college life as boys, yet the entrance to college is, with most, felt to be the entrance upon a more manly and independent manner of work. The young man henceforth is thrown more upon his own resources; his responsibility is greater. The longer part of this assumed period of seven years should be spent in the more manly study. Further, if the young man has but seven years to devote to college and professional study, I incline to the belief that he should spend four of these years on the general studies, laying the broad foundation on which to build his edifice of special research and attainment — but I believe in a four years' course for both college and professional school.

A sort of compromise between the claims of college and professional school is not only possible, but actual. To a large degree all good colleges have already arranged to give instruc-

tion which prepares the way directly for professional studies, and they are able to do much of this work better than it could be done in the professional schools. Let us consider the case of the student of medicine. Much more is required now than a few years ago as a basis for medical studies. The young man who is to do the best work in the medical school must be able to read scientific French and German ; he should be trained in the use of the microscope, and be well grounded in chemistry and biology, and should know the teaching of the best psychologists with regard to the nervous system. This training and knowledge can be acquired in college better than in the professional school ; the colleges have the best equipment for instruction in these subjects. These studies are simply preparatory to a good medical course.

In theology, too, the young man who is to have the highest advantages and make the best use of them may lay in college a thorough foundation for his New Testament Greek in the study of Plato and Aristotle, and should study his New Testament Greek itself from the philological standpoint ; he should be well grounded in Hebrew before he goes to the theological seminary, that the study of Old Testament criticism may not be hampered by elementary explanations and observations ; his philosophical studies should be sufficiently broad and deep to form a competent preparation for his study of dogmatic theology. Never before, too, has the clergyman needed general studies more than now. That he be a liberally educated man—in the fullest sense of the term—is even more important than that he be an excellent student of Hebrew, dogmatics, and homiletics. The college course is all too short for him to learn all the philosophy, ancient and modern literature, history, political science, etc., that he needs, and to teach him what scientific study really means.

In like manner, while still in college the young man may prepare himself for his study of law, by courses on constitutional history, on political science, and finance, to say nothing of courses on the principles of law itself.

Some may say, however, that they do not propose to cut off the senior year in college, but the Freshman year. The last two years of the college course have or may have too obvious relation to the later professional work, to allow of their excision. Can the first year of the college course be dispensed with? In that case the student is put directly from the preparatory school into courses of study for which he is not mentally prepared. He is still immature, and needs all the training which he receives at present before he takes up the more advanced studies.

In this case if anywhere in life, haste would make waste. If the boy can be carried through the primary and secondary schools with as much thoroughness as today, but with more dispatch, by the use of better methods, with more instruction, and possibly a longer school year—by all means let this be done. But let us not lower the standard which has been reached with so much labor. Evidence is accumulating and clear that the world needs and demands men of greater maturity and better training than ever before. This demand is acknowledged and men are meeting it. Our best professional schools require for admission a preliminary training which would have seemed wholly impracticable a generation ago, and never before have they had so large a proportion as at present of college-bred men among their students. To encourage young men to be satisfied with an inferior equipment for the sake of an only apparent saving of a year's time in the preparation for life, would be an injury to the community, and a still greater wrong to the young men themselves.

PRESIDENT ELIOT: As an advocate of the three years' course for many years past, I should like to make two assertions about my own attitude towards the subject and that of all reasonable advocates of the three years' course so far as I know. In the first place, we think that this question has nothing whatever to do with the expediency of more or less specialization in education. A good deal has been said on that point this morning; but the advocates of the measure believe that specialization might be increased or might be diminished, by the

choice of the individual student, under the three years' plan, just as it can be under the four. We say, therefore, that our position is not to be affected in any manner by an argument for or against specialization in education. In good colleges the student can specialize now as much as he pleases under a four years' course; under a three years' course, in our view, specialization might or might not be increased, might or might not be diminished. Neither do the advocates of the three years' course for colleges admit or believe that the reduction to three years would affect in any manner what may properly be called the thoroughness of preparation for professional study or for the work of life. We advocate nothing of that sort. If you consider the proportions of the different parts of Professor Seymour's paper I think you will perceive that a considerable proportion dealt, chiefly in a humorous way, with this matter of thoroughness, as if a three years' course meant less thoroughness. The advocates of the three years' course do not intend that the adoption of the three years' course shall affect in any injurious way the thoroughness of a young man's preparation for the work of life or for professional study. I think this point can be brought clearly to your minds by presenting to you the order of development of this discussion at Harvard.

When the subject was first broached in our faculty the opponents of the project said almost at once, "We cannot afford to reduce the number of courses demanded in college from eighteen to sixteen, or fifteen as some propose; because the secondary-school work is but a weak and narrow foundation for the college work, and we must continue to do in the college work which the American secondary school fails to do at the right time. To give up two college courses is to surrender one-ninth of the whole college work." The answer to that argument was, "Let us see what we can do towards improving the secondary school instruction, so that we may have an ampler basis for college work: let us begin by going to work on the secondary schools with such forces as we can command." That is just what has been done at Cambridge, and anybody who has observed the progress of American education for the last fifty or sixty years, as that progress is exhibited in statistics and in the personal product of the schools, must see clearly that during the last ten years there has been a great addition made through the efforts of secondary school teachers to the training which the youths receive in those schools. The schools already supply a better foundation for college work, and their pro-

grammes and methods are improving every day. This development of secondary school training in the last few years is one of the most remarkable educational phenomena which I have seen in my time. It affords the greatest encouragement to believe that the American youth of eighteen is to be a much more highly trained person in the future than he has ever been in the past, that he is to be on the average a better educated person than the American youth who now comes to college at nineteen. We have more training underneath the college, and consequently may introduce the three years' college course without reducing the sum total of liberal training.

Secondly, the Harvard faculty have been active in developing, systematizing, and intensifying college work. The elective system has helped them to do this, and the improvements effected represent much more than one-ninth of the college work of fifteen years ago.

As the result of these two efforts the advocates of the three years' course expect the future bachelor of arts, who shall leave school at eighteen and graduate from college at twenty-one, to be a better-trained man than his predecessor of fifteen years ago who entered college at nineteen and graduated at twenty-three.

At the other end of this subject is the development of professional education. Professor Wright has already put that before you in the clearest manner. It is indisputable; and it is going farther. The demand for time for professional education is not going to diminish; it is going to increase; it is increasing steadily; it is something which the community demands, and will have. The interest of all American society is that professional education should be steadily improved, and given added weight in the total course of education. Furthermore, what Professor Wright pointed out has become true within the last twenty years, and it is a great fact—namely, that professional training has in the best schools ceased to be what might properly be called a bread-and-butter or low-motived training; it has become a humanized training, as Professor Wright said, and in the best professional schools the studies are liberal, informing, and developing to the highest degree. The professional departments of Harvard University are far the finest departments of the university. I include, of course, among the professional departments the graduate school. They are the finest in temper or spirit, in the maturity of the men, in the powers they bring thither, and in the powers they carry away. Therefore, the college is to stand hereafter in America between

a greatly improved secondary school and a greatly improved professional school. It can no longer claim to be the sole representative of liberal education. It used to be the sole representative, or at least the sole worthy representative; it is now, and is to be, but one out of three.

Is the college going to last at all? That is a very important question. That is a question which the advocates of the three years' course for colleges have very carefully considered, and they have come to the conclusion that the lasting of the American college depends on reducing its term. What makes them think so? First, the experience of foreign nations. We are not as cultivated a people on the whole as the French, or the Germans, or the English. Can we give any reason why we should be able to maintain a four years' course in American colleges when the French have no such course at all, and nothing corresponding to it, when the Germans have nothing corresponding to such a course, when no continental nation of Europe has anything corresponding to it, and when the English have only a three years' course and very short years at that? Why should we be able to maintain what no European nation maintains? There is only one reason for our maintaining it thus far, and that is that the American college with a four years' course has been a mixture of secondary school and English college. When we destroy that mixture, when we assign to the secondary school what belongs to the secondary school, then we lose the reason for the four years' course in the American college.

Are there not some fundamental considerations of a permanent character which ought to determine this artificial division between different institutions of the whole period of education? Are there not some fixed points of division which depend on the nature of man and of human society, and may be scientifically determined? It seems to me that there are two such points. In the first place, I cannot think that boys on the average — I know there are exceptions — are fit for the freedom which they will have in any American college — I do not care to what denomination it may belong, or in what village or city it may be situated — before they are eighteen years of age; and, further, I believe that righteous and judicious school discipline is good for a boy till he is eighteen years of age. I call that age, therefore, a reasonably fixed point. Making plenty of exceptions for boys of unusual maturity or sturdiness, I maintain that, as a rule, boys should not leave the home or the school where they have had careful supervision, and go to



college at sixteen or seventeen, and that we ought to aim at the division point of eighteen years in the interests of the boys, the schools, and the colleges alike. This point seems to me to be determined by valid biological and ethical considerations.

Is there not another determinable point? I find another at the outer end of education—at the entrance into the vocation, at the first earning of a livelihood, at the assumption by the young man of the responsibility of supporting a family, and of taking independent action by himself, out of leading strings, and without incessant guidance. As a matter of fact, the graduates of Harvard, Yale, and many other American colleges and professional schools, are getting into life in that sense at about twenty-seven years of age. That is two or three years too late for young men to assume the responsibilities of supporting a family and taking up independent work in business or a profession. The undue postponement of marriage is in itself a very serious evil. Those of us who are old enough remember how astonished we were when General Scott, in 1861, wrote a letter saying that lieutenants had better not be over twenty-two years of age. I remember my own astonishment when I read that a boy of twenty-two should be fit to command a hundred men. But he was right, absolutely right, and the experience of the war showed that not only could men be lieutenants at twenty-two but they could be generals at twenty-three, twenty-four, and twenty-five, to the great advantage of the country. We have made a fundamental mistake, I believe, in American society, in that we bring our most highly trained young men too late into active life and to the responsibilities of the professions and of business. Professor Seymour has said that the American community was not demanding young men. If that be true, so much the worse for the American community. This unnatural retardation is bad for the American community, not only because it loses the efficient services of young men who have already come to their period of greatest activity, alertness, and vigor, but because the young men themselves miss, till later than is best, the training which comes with responsibility, and only with responsibility. There is an important moral issue here. I have heard gentlemen in college faculties talk as if the college were the only place in which a young man could ever get a really valuable training. But after college what? The young graduate is going out into the world; he is going to be a lawyer, or a physician, or a business man, or an engineer, and will he never have in those callings any opportunities of

obtaining a valuable training ? In my opinion there is no mental and moral training for well educated youth like the training of responsibility in real life ; and when we keep our young men from that highest training till they are twenty-seven or twenty-eight years old we do them deep injury. It is the artificial organization of American education which works that injury. This organization is comparatively recent.

I took the names of two hundred and fifty fairly eminent graduates of Harvard University, who have, as it were, represented Harvard University in the community from about 1875 to 1895, who in their respective communities have been what we call leading men in all the professions. I picked them out because they were such men. Of course, they graduated from fifty to thirty years ago. I took their ages out of the college records, and found that those men entered real life at twenty-two, twenty-three, and twenty-four years of age. If I were to name them here, you would perceive at once that they were, as I have said, representative Harvard men, who have made themselves conspicuously useful in the world. So this evil, this evil of bringing our young men too late into life, is a recent one. It has come about very naturally through the efforts of schools and colleges to extend and improve their work. They have succeeded so well that it is now time to compress into fewer years the preliminary training in liberal arts which school and college together provide.

One other point I should be glad to touch for a moment. Of course, at Harvard we have been discussing this subject with the necessities of the university before us, and we have been trying to discern what would be for the interests of Harvard University, as well as for the interest of the young men who come thither ; but, to my mind, the question is one of universal interest to all American colleges, and particularly it is of interest to the small college, to the country college, to the college which can do a solid, faithful, three years' work on top of good secondary school work finished at eighteen. I believe that, as this discussion goes on it will be seen more and more that the colleges have a common interest in this change, and that ultimately they will unite in it.

I have already mentioned that the English college of today requires for the B.A. degree a residence of only fractions of three years. The American college has so different a function from that of the English college that we might be excused for demanding even a

shorter residence than the English. Oxford and Cambridge are the resort of young men whose fathers were all educated themselves and are all well to do. We want to have the resort to the American colleges absolutely popular, derived from all classes and conditions in American society. The example of the English college should have the greater weight with us, because we want our colleges to be more popular institutions than the English. And here I found myself in disagreement with one of Professor Seymour's remarks. I should find it impossible to indicate by any general description bodies of American youth who had better not go to college; and, even with regard to individuals, I think that the more experience college administrators have in advising parents about sending their children to college, or in selecting the young people who had better go to college or had better not go to college, the more they doubt whether human wisdom is sufficient for those things. At any rate, I think it would be extremely rash to make any arrangements for an American college which are really based on the notion that it was desirable to keep out of college certain classes of American youth. It seems to me that all the structural arrangements of the American college ought to be made on the principle that the college training is to be accessible to every capable young American who is prepared to undergo the labors and sacrifices necessary to win it.

DR. WILLIAM GALLAGHER: This process has been going on at Harvard College for some years, I understand, the process by which young men practically graduate at the end of three years, taking a degree a year later, spending one year in the professional schools. Those who are opposed to the three-year plan say that this represents simply a student's cramming, pushing through the courses with the minimum of attainment. Those who, on the other hand, advocate the three-year plan, say it means that these are young men who are able to do as much in three years, certainly as the average students, perhaps as much as the best students, do in four. I should like to ask whether any data have been collected that would give us an idea as to the actual working of the plan in Harvard University in that respect, what these classes of students seem to represent.

PRESIDENT CHARLES W. ELIOT: I do not think any careful statistics can be furnished on that subject. When we first entered on this plan students who were not very good scholars were not allowed to try to get the B.A. in three years. Indeed the committee of supervision

demand of aspirants the grade which we call *magna cum laude* at graduation; so that in the earlier years all the men who attempted this task were men of unusual capacity; but gradually that standard has been lowered, I should say, and there is now less active supervision of the men who set out to do the four years' work in three. Nevertheless the men that attempt it are more ambitious than the average, or they are prompted by some motive which presses them forward in their education—the pecuniary motive for example. They see that they can save \$450 by doing four years' work in three; and they have to earn all their money, or it is hard for the family to supply that money, so that they feel the pecuniary motive strongly. I remember hearing the dean say one day that it was rather surprising how many Jews were going through in three years. He thought they showed a keener sense than the Gentiles of their personal interest in the abridgement of the course. But we have not made any definite compilation of statistics on this matter.

I noticed in the faculty meeting this week that thirty men were simultaneously given leave of absence this year who would otherwise have been in our senior class. At the end of the junior year they had finished, or very nearly finished, the four years' course. They can go into the professional schools, if they choose, or into business. They will get their degrees next June, although they have leave of absence this year. So the method is actually in use at Cambridge and we are learning how it works. We have found out already that it is not a good plan for a youth who has not finished his college work by some substantial quantity, like two full courses for example, that is, two courses of three hours a week throughout the year, to get leave of absence, and go into a professional school. He will not do as well in the professional school as if he had actually completed his college course. But when the young men have really finished the requirements for the A.B. degree, they can do just as well in the professional school as they would have done, in all probability, if they had stayed four years in college. Some of these men who obtain leave of absence enter the graduate school; and they feel, and I am sure I feel, that their fourth year is better spent in the graduate school than it would have been spent as a fourth year in Harvard College. I do not see how anybody can doubt that. The three years' proposition is not a proposition to diminish scholarly attainment; not at all. The good scholars in language, literature, history, philosophy, or science will

spend their time saved in college, first in the graduate school, and then in some apprenticeship to an older scholar or an experienced teacher. There is nothing in this proposition which tends towards the reduction of scholarship. Quite the contrary, as I believe ; because I have the strongest faith that the real scholar is better off in the graduate school or the professional school than he is in Harvard College. If he is going to invest a definite time, like four, five, or six years in his education, let him by all means invest as large a proportion of it as possible in the higher department.

After further discussion on motion, the association adjourned.

RAY GREENE HULING, *Secretary*.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

[It is to be regretted that limitation of space has compelled the omission of a part of the valuable discussions of this meeting. These will appear in full, however, in the Proceedings.—ED. SCHOOL REVIEW.]